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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 004983

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ETTC](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [KSTC](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN'S BORDER PROCEDURES REGARDING SCRAP METAL,
SPARE PARTS FROM IRAQ

REF: A. USDAO AMMAN IIR 6 853 0184 04 (6/15/04)

[1](#)B. USUN 1357

[1](#)C. FBIS EUP20040116000015 (1/15/04)

Classified By: DCM David M. Hale. Reasons: 1.5 (C, D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Government of Jordan (GOJ) Customs Department described procedures for handling scrap metal and spare parts at the Al Kerama border station with Iraq, a process that was upgraded in early May after the CPA issued licensing procedures in Iraq. Screening at the border includes an initial radiation scan and document check, followed by referral of all scrap metal and used spare parts to a separate border truck yard for review by a Special Security Committee. Those trucks that pass the committee screening are sent to a special free zone in Muwaqqar for further review. New spare parts are sent directly to Zarqa Free Zone. High-radiation cargos and those lacking proper documentation are refused entry into Jordan. Of about 400-500 trucks carrying goods from Iraq into Jordan daily, about 150-200 are hauling scrap metal or used spare parts. About one percent are rejected and turned back at the border.
END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) Jordan's handling of scrap metal has attracted increasing attention since a batch of low-radiation "yellow-cake" uranium oxide turned up at a Rotterdam scrap metal company last December (Ref C) sourced to a Jordanian scrap firm that was selling material from Iraq. Recent press reports have reported on the appearance in Jordan's scrap yards of hazardous scrap and apparently brand new materials -- including metal cables -- that may have been looted from Iraq sites, including possibly reconstruction projects.

[1](#)3. (C) Ref A notes that some scrap metal shipments contain suspect unexploded ordnance (UXO) requiring EOD evaluation at the Al Muwaqqar site near the Sahab industrial area 30 kilometers southeast of Amman. Ref B notes UNMOVIC finding UNMOVIC-tagged dual-use items in Jordanian scrap yards, but does not indicate any UNMOVIC coordination with Jordanian authorities.

GOJ Policy and Procedures on Scrap Metal From Iraq

[1](#)4. (SBU) Amjad Al-Majdoubbeh, a special assistant to the Customs Director General, told us June 17 that GOJ Customs halted imports of scrap from Iraq immediately after the Iraq war, but had loosened the prohibition by the fall. In December 2003 the GOJ established a Special Security Committee at the Al-Kerama border to review incoming shipments of scrap metal and used spare parts. GOJ Customs began tightening up its procedures on these shipments in early May after CPA issued regulations implemented by Iraq's Ministry of Trade for licensing the export of scrap metal from Iraq in April, he stated. Al-Majdoubbeh telephoned the Al-Kerama border station customs director in our presence to verify the current procedures. GOJ procedures at the Iraq border include radiation monitoring at the border gate where Customs agents carry out the first physical inspection of trucks and review the documentation. Required papers include an invoice or bill of lading and an Iraqi manifest from the Iraqi Border Police (Customs). If papers are not in order or radiation levels are above those set by Jordan's Atomic Energy Commission, the trucks are turned back at the first border station gate. Border gate inspectors are also trained to make an eyeball inspection for any possible arms or ordnance in scrap shipments.

[1](#)5. (SBU) All trucks carrying scrap metal or used spare parts that pass the first inspection at Al-Kerama are directed to a special border truck yard for further inspection by the Special Security Committee, which includes officers from Customs, Interior, intelligence, and the military. Trucks passing this next inspection are directed to the Inquairn Free Zone in Al Muwaqqar.

[1](#)6. (SBU) Al-Majdoubbeh emphasized that trucks carrying new spare parts are not subjected to this inspection regime; rather, if new parts meet the documentation requirements they are sent on the Customs Free Zone in Zarqa, he said.

Military Scrap Destined for Europe and India

17. (SBU) According to the Al-Kerama border customs director, an average of 400-500 trucks carrying goods pass out of Iraq to Jordan each day (excluding empty trucks). Of these, about 150-200 are carrying scrap metal or used parts, he relayed over the phone. He said that only about two trucks each day were turned back at the border after undergoing all border inspections. When asked why so many trucks were hauling scrap, he noted that most were carrying used military equipment or parts.

18. (SBU) Al-Majdoubah said that most of the scrap metal and used parts transits Jordan through Aqaba port for shipment to scrap yards in Europe and India.

19. (SBU) Irregular shipments to date have included whole machines disassembled and passed off as used parts and low-radiation shipments, said Al-Majdoubah.

10. (C) COMMENT: While an improved inspection regime is in place at the border, those irregular shipments that get through are a source of concern. Jordan's ongoing review of a Border Management Task Force will be one positive step forward toward more comprehensive handling of the problem. Also of concern is the policy of turning back high-risk shipments without any apparent cooperation with Iraqi authorities. Our source said the GOJ did not know whom to call on the Iraqi side regarding turn-arounds of hazardous or rejected shipments, even when communication systems might be working.
GNEHM